Agricultural Department Circular No. 28.

PROVINCE OF BRITISH COLUMBIA.

DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE.

Hints to Exhibitors at Fall Fairs.

(Revised by WM. J. BONAVIA, Secretary, from Bulletin No. 48.)

Fruit—Selection and Preparation of Plate Exhibits.

PLATES OF APPLES AND PEARS.

FIVE specimens to a plate are generally required. It is best to select direct from the tree, choosing a dozen most like the ideal. Handle them carefully—cotton-wool is good. Keep early kinds in a cool place until exhibition, and leave late kinds on the tree as long as possible. Pick crabs and other varieties of apples subject to water-core early enough to prevent its development. All apples and pears should be wiped before exhibition, and this is best done at the time fruit is being placed on the table.

SIZE.

Apples and pears should be of medium sizes. Jonathan and Spitzenberg should be about 138's; Snow and Cox's Orange 175's; Spy and McIntosh Red, 125's; other dessert varieties in similar proportion. In cooking varieties larger sizes are demanded, as, for example, 112's for Rhode Island Greening. Varieties such as Alexander, Beitgheimer, and Wolf River, whose large size is their recommendation, should be as large as possible, consistent with perfect colour, shape, freedom from blemishes, and condition. Pears are usually shown oversized; 2½ inches in diameter is about correct for the Bartlett, 2½ inches for Flemish Beauty, and other varieties in proportion.

COLOUR.

Colour should be as high as possible, consistent with the type of variety in the district. Red varieties of apples should be red all over. Blush varieties should have a good blush on the cheek. Green and yellow varieties should have as much red as can be secured, but the *clearness* of the green or yellow colour is of first importance in such varieties. Russet varieties should be evenly russeted all over, and bright-reddish russet rather than green. The same colour rules apply to pears as to apples.

UNIFORMITY.

Absolute uniformity is desired, especially in colour and size, because these are the two main points in grading.

FORM.

Form should be correct for the variety and district, but is not so important as colour and uniformity. Generally, the apple which grows from the centre blossom of a cluster is most typical and should be shown; in fact, to get uniformity in form and type, all apples should be so chosen.

Freedom from Blemishes and Condition.

The presence of fruit-pit and water-core is especially to be guarded against. Stems of all kinds should be intact.

PLATES OF PEACHES.

Size.

Size is an important point with peaches. The market demands them of the largest size. In the exhibition of late varieties, sizes from 60's to 72's are most desirable.

Colour.

Colour should be as high as possible, and specimens should be absolutely uniform in all respects. The form should be typical of the variety.

Freedom from blemishes is usually easy to get, but exhibitors must be careful to avoid split pits, which are very easily overlooked, while small bruises, not apparent at the time the fruit is set up, begin to show by the time it is judged.

In condition, the peaches should be firm.

PLATES OF PLUMS AND PRUNES.

For plates of plums and prunes twelve fruits are required. Choose a considerable number and select from them the most perfect twelve, being careful to preserve the bloom, and on plums the stems also. If early varieties, store carefully in a cold place. Avoid bruising and handle as little as possible. At show-time select the twelve best, watching carefully for skin-punctures, slight bruises, and other places where rot may commence.

Size.

They should be the largest obtainable for the variety, consistent with other points. Colour should be typical, uniform, and as high as possible. Freedom from blemishes is important, and such things as split pit and gummy pit, as in Pond's Seedling may be easily overlooked. The greatest care should be taken to have the stems intact in all varieties of plums, because usually when the stem is lost the skin is broken and decay will set in. Slight skin-punctures not readily apparent will quickly lead to brown-rot in many districts. Fruit should be firm and in first-class condition. If brought from cold-stor[illegible] should not have any moisture condensed on it. Preferably, the "bloom" [illegible] preserved. The stems need not be left on prunes.

SEEDLINGS AND FRUITS LISTE[illegible] .Y OTHER VARIETY."

These are very unsatisfactory classes to judge. Plates of seedlings, to receive awards, should excel standard varieties under culture locally, in colour, uniformity, and quality, while the specimens exhibited should have good commercial size and be free from blemishes. (As little or nothing as to their commercial value can be told from the plateful of apples, we do not consider this class of much value.)

COLLECTIONS OF APPLES, PEARS, PLUMS, ETC. (HOME ORCHARD).

In this collection there are the same requirements for size, colour, uniformity, form, freedom from blemish, and condition as are required of the individual varieties in their respective plate classes. As different varieties are shown in the different collections, however, their quality must be taken into consideration. Commercial value is considered also, because a great part of the product of the home orchard should be of value commercially to provide for the sale of excess yields. A wide range of varieties over the season is desired, and so is a range over the different uses to which the fruit is put—dessert, cooking, jamming, preserving, etc. Collections should not include more than twenty-five varieties.

COLLECTIONS OF APPLES, PEARS, PLUMS, ETC. (COMMERCIAL USE).

The requirements in this connection are in most respects like those of the previous one. The intrinsic merits of the fruit must meet commercial requirements, as discussed under plate fruits, but quality is less considered, and commercial value is given a higher score than in home collections. Generally, a list of over ten varieties of apples or four of pears is not encouraged, while the longest keeping commercial kinds should be given most consideration.

Department of Agriculture, Victoria, B.C., May, 1919.

Send to the Publications Branch, Department of Agriculture, Victoria, B.C., for:—

Bulletin 48, "Exhibiting Fruit and Vegetables."

Agricultural Department Circular No. 27, "Hints to Exhibitors—Fruit—Standards of Perfection on which the Judge's Scoring is Based."

Agricultural Department Circular No. 29, "Hints to Exhibitors—Boxed Fruits, Selection and Packing."

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